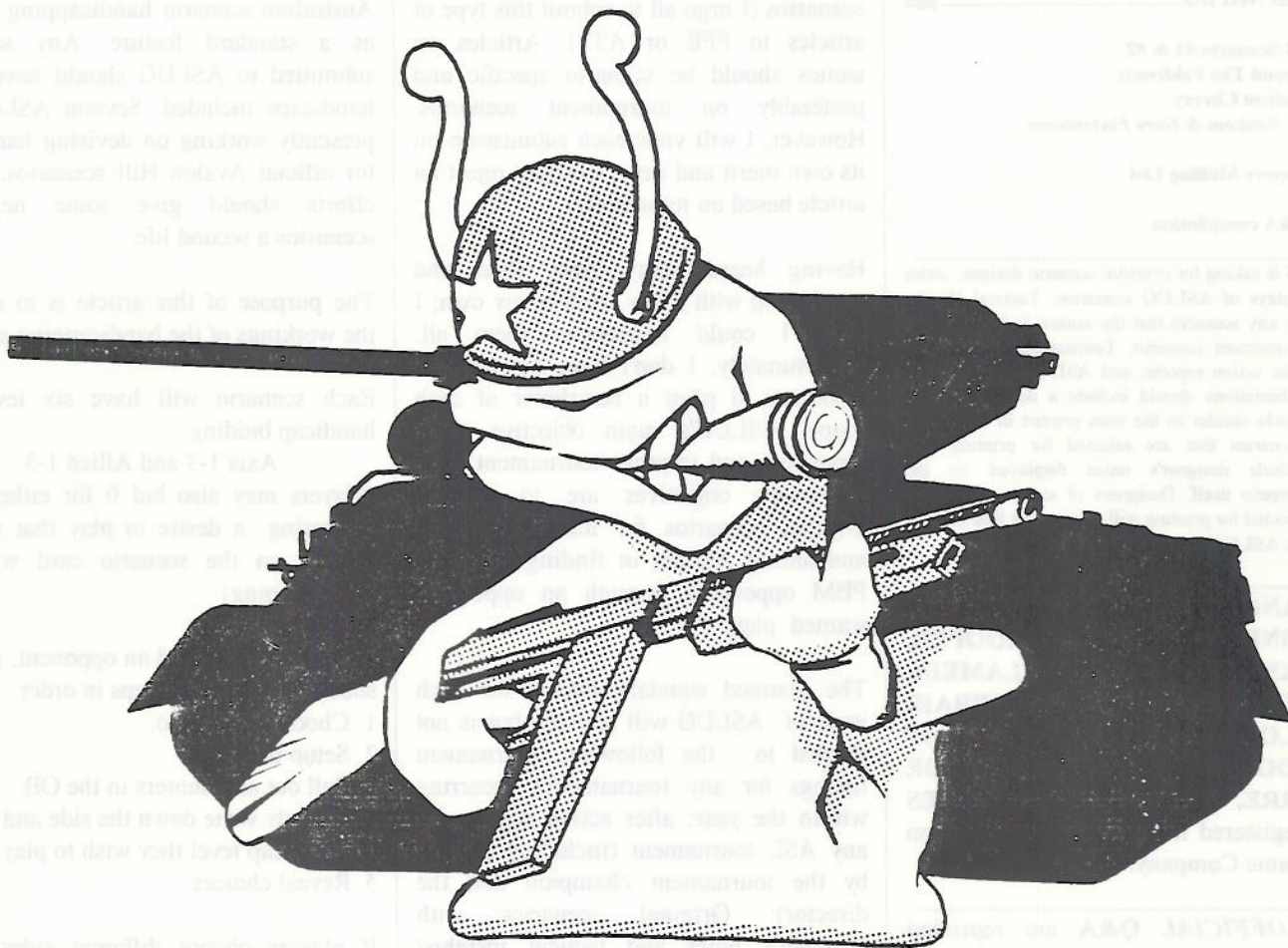


# A.S.L.U.G.

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER UNION of GAMERS ISSUE ONE APRIL 1993 THE SOURCE FOR ASL NEWS



## Tournament Coverage

Tournament Directors are encouraged to send in any information on their tournaments as soon as possible. Early release of information usually results in greater attendance.



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ASL Q&A compilation	

ASLUG is asking for *original* scenario designs; series replays of ASLUG scenarios; Tactical Guides for any scenario that the author feels is a good tournament scenario; Tournament listings and after action reports; and ASL tactical contests. Submissions should include a designer's notes article similar to the ones printed in this issue. Scenarios that are selected for printing will include designer's name displayed on the scenario itself. Designers of scenarios that are selected for printing will receive one free issue of the ASLUG newsletter.

**ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER, BEYOND VALOR, PARATROOPER, YANKS, WEST OF ALAMEIN, PARTISAN, THE LAST HURRAH, HOLLOW LEGIONS, CODE OF BUSIDO, GUNG HO, CROIX DE GUERRE, and RED BARRICADES** are registered trademarks of the Avalon Hill Game Company.

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**Subscriptions** to ASLUG are \$25/year US and Canada. \$30/year foreign for 12 issues. ASLUG will be mailed on the first day of each month.

## Tournament Coverage

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## WHAT'S ASLUG?

To be honest, I'm a little undecided as to what ASLUG should encompass. I don't want to be another FFE, Rout Report or ATP, these magazines each fill a separate niche in ASLdom, and duplication of their efforts would be counterproductive as each editor would be fighting for the same articles from a limited pool of contributors. Accordingly, I will not ask for submissions of articles on *general* tactics, or series replays of non-ASLUG scenarios (I urge all to submit this type of articles to FFE or ATP). Articles on tactics should be scenario specific and preferably on tournament scenarios. However, I will view each submission on its own merit and never outright reject an article based on its subject.

Having heard many great ideas and coming up with a few ideas of my own: I wish I could implement them all. Unfortunately, I don't have the time or resources to print a newsletter of such scope. ASLUG's main objective is to report on, and improve tournament play. Secondary objectives are to provide original scenarios for tournament use, and aiding ASLers in finding FTF and PBM opponents through an opponents wanted page.

The planned standard format for each issue of ASLUG will include, but is not limited to, the following: tournament listings for any tournaments occurring within the year; after action reports for any ASL tournament (including articles by the tournament champion and the director); Original scenarios with designer's notes and tactical insights/series replays in the following issue. Three times a year ASLUG will print an ASLers locator made up from mailing lists from several sources. Once a year a compilation of all *Official* ASL Q&A, and a scenario win/loss record from all reported sources will be included as any easy to use reference.

New features may be added as ASLUG evolves. If any readers have ideas they would like to share, please send them to:

Gary Fortenberry  
232 Linda Dr.  
Burleson, TX 76028

Preferred format is IBM 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" floppy disk. Save as an ASCII text file or as a Microsoft Word document. All printed submissions should be double spaced, handwritten articles will be accepted if legible.

## AUSTRALIAN SCENARIO HANDICAPPING

All ASLUG scenarios will have the Australian scenario handicapping system as a standard feature. Any scenario submitted to ASLUG should have these handicaps included. Several ASLers are presently working on devising handicaps for official Avalon Hill scenarios. These efforts should give some neglected scenarios a second life.

The purpose of this article is to explain the workings of the handicapping system.

Each scenario will have six levels of handicap bidding.

Axis 1-3 and Allied 1-3

(Players may also bid 0 for either side indicating a desire to play that side as printed on the scenario card with no handicapping)

After being assigned an opponent, players should follow these steps in order.

1. Choose a scenario.
2. Setup the board.
3. Pull out all counters in the OB.
4. Secretly write down the side and Handicap level they wish to play.
5. Reveal choices.

If players choose different sides, each plays the side and the Handicap level chosen.

If both players choose the same side, the player with the higher handicap level plays the side he chose and the other player plays the opposite side at Handicap level 0.

If players choose the same side and Handicap level, Low DR plays side chosen with Handicap level bid, High DR plays the other side at level 0.

It is important to note these are **HANDICAPS**, the higher the bid the more you **GIVE UP**.



## Designers Notes:

### ASLUG #2

## CHATEAU CHERRY

This sort of situation has a lot of attraction for me; the Attacker has seemingly overwhelming force and orders to drive through the outnumbered defenders, destroying all as they go; while the Defender must hold on for as long as possible against desperate odds. The historical action is the stuff of Hollywood legend. Colonel Cherry and his men played a role in the overall picture that Eastwood or Bronson would fit right into.

Most of my sources praised Cherry and his men for their doggedness and bravery. They had a difficult assignment and events placed them in a precarious position from which they performed an invaluable task and then extricated themselves with skill.

Types of vehicles, other than medium and light tanks, HTs and jeeps, used by the combatants in this situation are not specified in my sources, so I chose for effect. I decided to make the Order of Battle and special rules as sexy as the situation. Included are many high-profile units on both sides; For the US - Paratroopers, an Easy-Eight, a Heavily armed HT, .50 cal., a jeep with a machine gun, and a tough Belgian Chateau to hide in; For the Germans - Attacking with units of the Elite Panzer Lehr Division, Flame-throwers, Demo charges, a Wirbelwind, Panzer IVs, and Half-track-mounted Panzer Grenadiers on the attack in the snow-covered Ardennes, with time of the essence.

The victory conditions were formulated from the historical necessity the Germans faced with clearing the roads to allow follow-up units quick passage to the action. A relatively small unit of enemy infantry in a fortified position overlooking one of these roads, which would normally be bypassed, could slow or even stop the progress of the advance. Any delay of this sort would be disastrous to OKW Strategic Objectives.

The Game Length may seem short to some, especially after playing a conservative German attack. Eight turns was chosen to lend a growing sense of the need for speed in clearing these pesky Americans from the path of the advance. Most playtests have gone to the wire with the turn record chart, before reaching a decision. Entry and setup requirements for the Germans allow for flexibility and should give the German the initiative throughout the scenario.

A Tactical Hints article and Series Replay of this scenario will appear in issue 2 to be mailed May 1, 1993.

## ASLUG TACTICAL CONTEST #1

ASLUG will print Tactical Contests on ASL. Contest submissions should include a solution and short write up on the tactical points highlighted. The Author of the first correct answer received will have his name printed in the following issue of ASLUG.

This First Tactical Contest is rated 4 on a difficulty scale of 1-10.

### SETUP -- Board 1

Setup units as indicated from top to bottom.

### GERMAN

CC6 -- HMG 6-5-8, 1-3-5 Pillbox 37L

ATG 2-2-8 Crew (CA DD4).

FF5 -- 2S Cap FH 3-4-8x3

GG6 -- 10-3 Leader.

### U. S

V1 - M3(MMG) Halftrack CE passengers  
9-2 and 3-4-6 HS.

AA3 -- 5-3-6, Wounded 10-3.

Wounded 8-0, 6+1, 1-4-9 Hero.

CC7 -- 8-1, 3-4-6 x 2

**Situation** - It is the beginning of the last U.S. Player turn. They must exit as many Victory points off GG5/GG6 as possible, by game end. The Germans are suffering from Ammunition Shortage.

All original DRs are = to 7; All original dr's are = to 3.

Please indicate all activities of all units. The player exiting the most VP will receive a copy of CROIX De Guerre. In th case of ties a random drawing will determine the winner.

## TOURNAMENT NEWS

Reporting ASL tournaments to its readers is the main purpose of ASLUG. Any tournament news will be printed. Tournament Directors are encouraged to send in their tournament news as earlier as possible.

### The 1993 ASL Team Tournament

6PM Friday May 28 -

6PM Sunday May 30, 1993

Austin, TX

The Sheraton on Sixth Street

Tournament Organizer:

Mike Senigen

c/o Battlefields Unlimited

4607 Yellow Rose Trail

Austin, TX 78749

(512)892-7169

### AVALONCON 1993

## THE NATIONAL BOARDGAMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

August 5th-8th, 1993

Baltimore, MD

For More info send an SASE to:

The Avalon Hill Game Company

4517 Harford Rd, Baltimore, MD 21214

### ASL OKTOBERFEST 1993

Columbus Day Weekend

Cleveland, OH

Contact:

Bill Conner

P.O. Box 4114

Youngstown, OH 44515-0114

(216) 797-9009

Personal inserts, including registration forms, by Tournament Directors will be included at the rate of \$5.00/page of copy/issue to cover the cost of photocopies and the added cost of mailing.



## TACTICAL BRIEFS

This column is devoted to do and don't hints. Contributors will be promoted at the rate of 1 rank per 5 printed hints.

- Stack units only when absolutely necessary, i.e. when you need the movement bonus or fire direction modifier of a leader, etc. Stacks are more vulnerable to enemy fire and they are more economical targets for the enemy.

- Pvt. Dan Kunkel -

- When you are the Scenario DEFENDER you may Bore Sight. This allows you to check LOS's before play begins, always do so (Note: these LOS checks may be made to ANY locations you choose). It could give you a slight advantage that may turn into a game winner. [Ed note: If you have Pre-Registered fire capability you may also check LOS's before play begins.]

- Pvt. Mark Foreman -

- Always check out all of your vehicles in the vehicle note's section. You may find something neat. Some vehicles come with passenger half-squads, full squads, and support weapons above and beyond the printed Order of Battle.

- Pvt. Dan Kunkel -

- If your squad is portaging 5 PP of equipment and you have a leader stacked with him you can actually get six MP's worth of movement out of the MMC. Here's how Double Time the MMC and move the leader with it. The Leader may lend its own PP to the MMC. This yields 6 MP's for the MMC:

4 Basic + 2 Leader Bonus + 2 Double time - 2 excess PP.

- Pvt. Dan Kunkel -

- If the enemy runs up to you and has plans of placing a DC on your stack of concealed dudes, your best bet may be to wait on firing on him until the DC is actually placed on your troops. After he places it on your guys the resulting AFPh attack will be resolved as AREA fire regardless of concealment status at the time of resolution. An added bonus to allow the attack is that he no longer has the DC.

- Pvt. Gary Fortenberry -

- When expecting enemy fire and you wish to keep residual FP to a minimum, move concealed units first. This will reduce the amount of residual left in the location.

- Pvt. Dan Kunkel -

- Here's a neat trick to use if you have the Japanese and tunnel capability.

Set up a HIP leader in possession of a FT, and a HS in a tunnel entrance. When the enemy moves ADJACENT reveal the FT toting leader and let'er rip. If the enemy has a Good Order MMC left ADJACENT he now thinks, "Ah, I've got me a cocky little leader with a nice weapon, that can't break and rout away. Gee, I'm glad my opponent was so kind as to let me neutralize this thing so easily." Imagine his surprise when in the Rout Phase you reveal the HIP HS and announce the leader will accompany him as it breaks and routs away to safety. You may not even need to reveal the tunnel if you have another Rout path.

- Pvt. Gary Fortenberry -

- Due to Infantry OVR a SMC counter can no longer be assured of blocking enemy movement. However, two SMC's block as well as any MMC.

- Pvt. Leo Neichoy -

- To deny SW's to the enemy when you don't have enough PP to carry them all, consider deploying. You double your PP's and sacrifice little.

- Pvt. Leo Neichoy -

- In Red Barricades to stop monster HMG Fire Groups directed by 10-3 leaders from totally dominating the playing area, I buy Heavy Weapons Companies. The Mortars this yields up allow Smoke placement with multiple ROF. What that 10-3 can't see he can't hurt.

- Pvt. Mark Foreman -

- Instead of Searching and possibly taking Search casualties. Use a HS to attempt to physically enter the location(s) you wish to search. This will reveal at least one real unit or place HIP units on board with no Search casualty dr. It will also allow the HS to Advance if he wishes. The enemy also must make a choice of shooting this pest or saving fore for later units, that may not move at all.

- Pvt. Gary Fortenberry -

- Consider leaving Order of Battle given ? counters out of play. This will hinder a counter counting opponents efforts to determine your defensive layout. When he tells you he thinks you have some pieces missing or whatever, just look concerned and say, "Well, its past the point of commission now".

- Pvt. Eric Eshelman -

- When you are given OB ? counters, along with vehicles or especially Guns you could set up HIP, set up as many Dummy stacks containing a Large ?/Large ?/Small ? as you have GUNS capable of HIP. When your opponent tells you that those GUNS could setup HIP, ask him to show you the rule and then refuse to re-setup. Imagine his surprise when he runs into an ATG ambush that he did not expect.

- Pvt. Eric Eshelman -

- Approach enemy ATGs/Vehicles that must fire through a CA along one of that CA's boundaries. If it fires at you and you live you can move to the other side of the CA boundary forcing another DRM.

- Pvt. Lawrence Railey -

- Park your vehicles in concealment terrain at the end of their MPh. They can gain ? and when the enemy moves into LOS they don't automatically lose it.

- Pvt. Gary Fortenberry -

- In some scenarios an entire flank can be secured by setting a fire in a grain field or woods. They both spread readily, and the enemy can't move through a terrain blaze.

- Pvt. Rusty Everett -

- Drive a lightly armored Half-Track into that ATG's Location. If it shoots and kills the HT it will likely flame. If he ignores the HT he can't shoot out of the location. In either case, you have tied up the ATG for a while.

- Pvt. Don Moore -

- Leave all allowable acquisitions on board. You never know when the enemy will move something through an acquired location and give you a juicy target to lock onto and track. Also, the threat of the acquisition may actually keep the enemy out of a location you would rather not have him in.

- Pvt. Gary Fortenberry -



## BOARDEDGE CREEP STIGMA

MARK C. NIXON

Over the years I have heard some arguments that an attacking force that utilizes the edge of the playing area to protect one flank is gaining an unfair and unrealistic advantage over the defender, which could not be gained in real action. I do not intend to tackle the very enormous issue of realism in ASL at this particular time and place (but will happily jump into it eventually), but do want to expound upon some thoughts regarding the Boardedge Creep Stigma (BECS).

My opinion is that the BECS is totally blown out of the water by the rebuttal that the defender in such a situation has the same "unfair" advantage as the attacker by virtue of his assurance that the opponent cannot pass beyond the edge of the board. What real-life defender ever operates with such a condition? The defending commander knows he need not commit forces to defend beyond a certain line, for the attacker is restricted and not permitted to pass further to either flank. For that matter, any defense which actually does allow an attacker to slip around one flank or the other is really no more than a faulty defense, after all.

I have heard the argument continue that the attacker is unfairly free from worry on an entire flank, but, of course, so is the defender free from that same worry. In a sense, the boardedge actually saves the gaming life of the defender, for he has no defense beyond the boardedge; the attacker would actually love to go there. Perhaps the lesson this seems to convey is that anyone designing a scenario would do well to add boards along the flanks to allow play to spill over, beyond the otherwise invisible restraining lines. Unfortunately, this merely creates other problems without resolving the BECS matter. On our enlarged battlefield the defender must now feel compelled to anticipate bold lateral strokes from the enemy and move to prevent them.

Likewise, the attacker will rightfully seek his best possible course to victory and either move for the sidelines or else hit the defender in the center, where he has been weakened by his newfound need to defend wider flanks. In the end the defense probably inherits some added strength, thanks to the designer who now feels the attacker has too many options, and the end product is simply a larger scenario than planned and one that has done nothing to address the BECS. Well, this is not meant to be an exercise in scenario design, but I wanted to illustrate that the BECS is a game mechanic which, for better or worse, may be difficult to avoid.

I hope this adequately covers my point that the BECS is not so much an example of attacker/defender advantage as it is an indicator of the regrettable fact that the game must make some concessions to playability. To do it right (realistic) the scenario would have to include the neighboring actions on all sides and then, logically, extended actions bordering that enlarged battle scene, and so on and on until there would be no boundaries left. At that point we'd be fighting all of W.W.II at a 1:1 scale and there would be real blood involved and people dying. But, so that we may play ASL (best wargame ever, remember?) it seems convenient enough to visualize additional and unknown enemy forces operating beyond the edge of the board (there's that "fog of war" we were looking for) in sufficient and uncertain numbers that we have opted to keep our distance. The attacker who uses a BECS has willingly chosen an avenue of assault which does have its drawbacks, for he has denied himself the possibility of movement towards the flank he has nailed his force up against whereas the attack up the center of the battlefield would have left movement to both flanks possible. Also, the defender might be able to block the BECS attack easier due to the culmination of all these factors; the attack might just find it has no way out.

Of course the BECS is not an issue in every scenario, for it seems to occur only in those encounters which feature board exit as part of the VC. This only stands to reason, for how often could BECS be a concern in scenarios which require occupation of terrain or elimination of enemy forces, for example? Perhaps it is all needless concern after all, but no matter my opinion that the BECS gives neither player an advantage, in certain scenarios we are still faced with the seemingly peculiar spectacle of an attacker thrusting everything at his command down a single boardedge. The question at this point is whether this depicts a realistic W.W.II scene or not, and I see argument both pro and con. Considering the fabricated nature of Victory Conditions that insist upon some number of CVP exited, it becomes a bit difficult to suggest the image of the attacker burning down one boardedge is any less realistic than the VC itself. Both are, in truth, merely game mechanisms which contribute to the general definition of ASL itself. Both sacrifice realism for the sake of creating a realm in which the game can be played to a conclusion with the end result determining a winner and a loser. In our theoretical example of real life W.W.II combat, scenarios such as we find in ASL would never have start and end times with winners and losers assessed every twenty minutes or half hour. All of which begins to thrust us into the concept of realism in ASL which I still intend to avoid here, but this peek was necessary in order to make the point that expecting the game to play realistic is an impossibility. The game cannot be reality; it cannot be combat, but it doesn't try to be, either. It tries to represent reality and so can be judged a success if it presents an acceptable representation. This is quite different from judging it based upon its effectiveness at being reality.

For those who find the BECS too far detached from reality there are certainly ways to design scenarios to eliminate or curtail the tactic, even in situations where the exit VC is chosen. One might force the attacker to enter play in only the center of the playing area rather than along the entire boardedge, thus making access to the BECS less appealing.



This, in fact, is exactly what happened during playtest of at least one scenario that comes to mind, The Battle For Rome. In the original design the Germans were able to enter along the entire boardedge and it was found they usually made an immediate thrust down one flank or the other, outracing the Italian reinforcements from the far flank. Exactly the sort of thing such playtesting is meant to uncover, the change was made so the Germans, in the printed version, are denied immediate BECS status by their centralized entrance requirement. They can still reach the boardedge, but some of the sting has been removed and the minor flaw thus corrected.

The other obvious adjustment which could be made in the design process is to limit the exit area to a central area of the playing surface, as in Holding the Rear. In this one, the Germans are free to enter and attack anywhere on three boards but must eventually swing back into the center for their exit. Yet a third method available to curtail BECS was best illustrated by an SSR in Dash For The Bridge which actually made specific provision for the attacking units exiting the playing area as well as for defending units committed to tie them up. In the intervening eight years I am a bit surprised and disappointed more scenarios have not offered SSR of similar nature. Most certainly, such an SSR allows yet a bit more of the fog of war to creep into play.

For any desiring ways to handle scenarios already published which you feel give one side or the other too much advantage due to BECS, or which allow play to proceed along lines unacceptable from a realism point of view, I have a suggestion or two. First of all, write to this publication or to me personally and we will discuss the specific situation/scenario through this journal. An alternative, a very attractive one I might add, is to take your scenario to the next convention and approach one or two of the old pros with it. Go ahead and take your favored side and pull your best moves. Often times moves and tactics I've thought were crushing were, in turn, smashed totally by expert opposition. You already know whom to look for to gain this kind of expert feedback (Conner, Fortenberry, Cocke, McGrath, Chaney, Baker, ta-da-ta-da-yeah-yeah-yeah).

## OVER THE NEXT HILL

Coming up next time

- Two new scenarios, with Designers notes, one set near Buna with Aussies on the attack and Dug In Japanese Defenders facing off tanks, and the other a Bill Sisler design set in France in 1940 with the French on the attack near Drury.
- Standard Tournament Rules by Mike McGrath. This should set standard for Tournament Directors looking for a smooth tournament.
- A Series Replay of Chateau Cherry.
- More Tactical Briefs.
- Others to be announced.